



Pleasant Hill Calls to Action



Clark, Charlie Jul. 23

to JAltenberg, cm.smith@sasktel.n... ▾



Dear Jennifer, Cecile, Sharon, Sasha, and Shane,

Thank you for your letter from July 10, 2019 about what the City is doing to collaboratively and creatively work towards safety in the Pleasant Hill area. We also thank you for demonstrating leadership on this issue. The commitment you show to the work that you do to improve the quality of life for those in Pleasant Hill as volunteers warrants recognition. Your dedication is a sign of strength for both your neighbourhood and the city as a whole, and we do not take your passion and dedication for granted.

We appreciate having the opportunity to meet with you all on July 26 to discuss these issues and next steps. These conversations are not only a time to get on the same page and to share our experiences, but they are also a chance to come together to collaborate and problem-solve.

We also have been told by our City's administration that you have presented a letter to City Council and that it will be presented to the Planning, Development and Community Services Committee. It is our understanding that the administration is planning on providing a written response to you as well after committee discusses this issue in August. Thank you for including the City's administration in this, as this is an important piece in making progress on community safety and wellbeing in Pleasant Hill and city-wide.

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We recognize that the current system is not working and that there is much work to do to help address the issues that you have raised. There is a need for better coordination among the various actors and agencies that are doing work in this area. Our goal is to ensure that people living in Pleasant Hill feel safe and have the same access to services and quality of life as any other neighbourhood in our city.

Many of the topics that you point out in your letter are complex social issues that require coordinated and concerted effort, such as poverty reduction, gang violence, and the proliferation of drugs. As you point out, these issues are not new, although they have become more prominent in recent months. The City, Police, Social Services, or any other organization or agency cannot address these solutions alone, but it instead has to be a collaborative effort with community. There are different examples of this collaborative work in our community, such as the Saskatoon Homelessness Action Plan, the Saskatoon Poverty Reduction Partnership, and more recently the Safe Community Action Alliance and the ConnectYXE initiative to help address the over incarceration of Indigenous youth in Saskatoon. This approach of partnership and working with the community is core to how the City of Saskatoon needs to pursue work in this area, and it will also be core to our success in addressing the issues you have outlined.

Property maintenance and holding landlords to account is something that has been identified as an ongoing challenge for the City, and policy opportunities have been identified. We both want to see progress on this—and want to see it sooner rather than later—but at this time we will have to let the administration provide you with a response to the specific progress being made. We do, however, want to discuss your specific observations around boarded up houses to better understand where there may be opportunities for improved coordination among engaged agencies.

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We want to champion your work and to stand alongside you and the community on these issues. The City should be an enabler of good work, creative solutions, and improving safety and quality of life in our community. We are working hard to understand your frustration and share your concern with the status quo, and we want to work with you to serve the community—to use your own words, to “flip the script.” Although there is work that remains to be done in Pleasant Hill, there is strong leadership in this community and a desire to have the neighbourhood thrive.

We look forward to meeting with you on July 26, and if you want to be in touch prior to then please don’t hesitate to do so.

Charlie Clark
Gough

Mayor
City Councillor

Hilary

Ward 2